13

Race and ethnicity in the media

ANTHEA IRWIN

INTRODUCTION

The bulk of this chapter will analyse in detail two examples of recent press coverage: one of asylum and in particular unrest in detention, and the other the voluntary flight/abduction of Misbah Rana from Scotland to Pakistan. The two case studies are interesting in and of themselves, but they also throw up more general questions.

Before embarking on the case studies, the chapter starts with some general thoughts on other aspects of the topic. The definition of race and ethnicity is complex, and certainly no less so in the Scottish context than elsewhere. Although the two words are often used interchangeably, it is generally agreed that while race is a biological, physiological attribute, ethnicity is broader and takes in other aspects of identity such as shared language or shared religion. Key to this difference is the fact that ethnicity takes in one's own experience or identity, that is, we could say that while race is an objective phenomenon, ethnicity is to some extent a subjective one. This renders yet more problematic the fact that so much of what is written in the press and elsewhere about people who are members of ethnic-minority communities is written from an apparently objective stance by members of majority communities.

Ethnicity has in recent years become the more common term, which shows a certain awareness of the complexities of groups' identities. That said, Sarah Isal points out that, while discrimination in the 1960s to the 1980s tended to be based on skin colour, in latter decades it has also been based on other factors such as cultural practices and religious beliefs. So awareness of such factors has not been wholly positive; one product of it has been a move from racism to

'racisms' (Runnymede Trust 2000, cited in European Network Against Racism 2002: 8).

In relation to this, it is important to remember that applying the label 'ethnic' to people and artefacts from ethnic minority communities is a misnomer. As with so many other aspects of identity, those that are less dominant become 'othered' and, via this process, they also become a 'marked' category. It is the case, however, that every individual is 'ethnic', that white British and white Scottish are ethnicities as much as any other. Indeed, a fuller discussion of ethnicity in the Scottish media would be lacking if it did not consider the various 'white' ethnicities that are present in Scotland, for example the Irish and English communities, and the extent to which these, historically and currently, could be considered to be dominant or minority groupings (in the symbolic as well as the numerical sense).

RECENT WORK ON RACE AND ETHNICITY IN THE UK MEDIA

Rosa Tsagarousianou has recently argued that it is more useful to think of ethnicity in the media in terms not of portrayals of individual ethnic groups, but as 'construction of difference' which works 'along the lines of a majority/minority divide, establishing a binary and not uncommonly antagonistic relationship' (Westminster Media Forum 2007: 9). There are echoes here of Edward Said's (1979) theory of 'Orientalism' which explores how the West has constructed an identity for the 'orient' that has more to do with constructing a dominant identity for the West itself. Tsagarousianou also suggests that we should not only analyse representations but also absences of representation, a point also raised by Norman Fairclough (1995) about more general analysis of the media.

Rachel Morris, in an essay about gypsies, travellers and the media, warns that it is not simply a case of providing more 'positive' representations: these may be constructed by dominant groups and may not necessarily equate with the representations the group in question would choose, so what is needed is a range of representations and input from that group (Morris 2000: 217–18). In a similar vein, Karina Horsti (2007: 29) explores the fact that 'unexpectedly, marginalisation and recognition can co-exist. The minorities can be recognised and marginalised at the same time'. She is referring to the fact that, whilst multicultural media initiatives are to be welcomed, multicultural newspaper pages and series of stories are generally backgrounded in relation to more traditional material.

Writing about mainstream media content, Sarah Neal provides an interesting illustration of a 'changing same' (Gilroy 1993, cited in Neal 2003: 71) in relation to media discourses around the Brixton Inquiry and the Scarman

Report in 1982, and the Lawrence Inquiry and the Macpherson Report in 1999. Neal observes that the focus in 1999 was on social justice while in 1982 it had been on avoiding further unrest. However, this social justice element was for the most part specific to the Lawrence family, and in a wider sense more normative discourses, for example the critique of political correctness, prevailed. Poynting and Mason (2007) make a similar point in a paper warning against simplistic analyses that postulate a dramatic rise in Islamophobia post 9/11, viewing this instead in a context of existing tendencies in what they term 'everyday racism'. The transformation of the 'other' from Asian or 'Pakistani' to 'Muslim' was, they claim, 'already under way since the Rushdie affair in 1989, and arguably since the Iranian Revolution in 1979' (Poynting and Mason 2007: 81).

ASYLUM AND THE MEDIA IN SCOTLAND: THE GENERAL PICTURE

The detention case study I shall explore formed part of a project undertaken with the Oxfam UK Poverty Programme (Oxfam 2006), which monitored three months' press coverage (mid-July to mid-October 2004) of asylum in a range of Scotland-based papers and Scottish editions of London-based papers, including tabloids and broadsheets, and papers with different editorial viewpoints.[1] In common with other reports (Oxfam 2001; Welsh Media Group 2002), this report found that press coverage that was Scotland-based was relatively more favourable to asylum seekers than that which was UK-based. Furthermore, the study suggested that coverage in Scotland had become more favourable than it was at the time of the previous studies.

This is illustrated by the main themes covered in the stories. There is an interesting trend when we differentiate according to whether the stories focus on Scotland or the UK more widely, which also illustrates a difference between Scottish-based and UK-based papers, given that the former include more stories about Scotland while the latter include more stories about the UK in general. In the former category, the order of emphasis is detention (close to 50 per cent), crime, policy; in the latter category, the pattern is policy, crime, detention. This suggests two things: firstly, Scottish-based reporting of asylum has a more 'human' face; secondly, the fact that the Dungavel detention centre has been a hotly debated issue in Scottish politics has fed through to news discourse, thus accounting partly for the continued increase in favourable coverage.

The political system in Scotland could also be seen to have had a bearing on the voices which were heard in the coverage. Whilst the vast majority of these were political ones, as other studies have found, there was some differentiation between stories with a Scottish focus and those with a UK focus. In the stories

with a Scottish focus, individual members of the Scottish parliament (MSPs) had higher visibility than was evident for the UK as a whole, where the debate appeared to be dominated by central government spokespeople. A number of campaigning voices could be heard in stories that focused on Scotland, including the Children's Commissioner Kathleen Marshall, trades unions and groups such as Glasgow Campaign to Welcome Refugees. Such voices were largely absent in stories with a UK focus. The proportion of asylum-seeker and refugee voices in both categories of story was low, but this must be considered in the context of asylum seekers often feeling uncomfortable speaking to the media and being worried about the consequences of doing so (Article 19 2003).

All of that said, favourable coverage or even campaigning coverage is not the same thing as proactively positive coverage. Almost without exception, the stories dealt with the 'problem' of asylum, that is, asylum seekers or the asylum system depending on their stance. Stories that contextualised the reasons why people had sought asylum in the first place, or which explored aspects of asylum seekers' lives other than the fact that they were asylum seekers, were virtually non-existent. This lack of context is reminiscent of the three reports already mentioned. ICAR (2004) also raises lach of context in asylum reporting as having implications for readers' understanding. This, of course, is in keeping with the general 'news values' of any newsroom, which tend to favour simplicity and negativity, but it is worth pointing out nonetheless.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The analysis which follows identifies press coverage as a site of struggle where competing discourses vie for dominance and a simplistic distinction between positive and negative portrayals is problematised. It is indebted to the work of Michel Foucault on ideology and power, and to a number of analyses of lexical representation and narrative structure. Fowler (1991) draws our attention to the implications of word choice for how a news actor is viewed, and the implications of transitivity – the verb processes employed – for where responsibility is seen to lie. Fairclough (1995) talks about 'degrees of presence', the fact that different aspects of an event can be foregrounded, backgrounded or presupposed. Van Dijk (1998), whose previous 1989 work is one of the seminal texts on how race and ethnicity are treated in the media, brings in a relational aspect when he observes a common relational pattern in news discourse that he labels the 'ideological square'. This consists of an 'us' group and a 'them' group with the 'good' and 'bad' acts of each being variously highlighted or mitigated. Bell (1991), who has been a working journalist, points out that news narratives, unlike most informal oral narratives, are not chronological, and that it is

therefore possible for the order in which events have occurred, and by extension the cause-and-effect relationships between different events, to be 'lost'.

CASE STUDY 1: UNREST IN DETENTION

The bare facts were that in the summer of 2004 when a detainee at the Harmondsworth detention centre outside London committed suicide, there was some violence at the centre; some detainees were moved to Dungavel detention centre in Lanarkshire; a few days later a detainee in Dungavel committed suicide; and some detainees were then moved from Dungavel. It is not possible to examine the coverage of these events in full here, so a sample of stories which illustrate key patterns has been discussed.[2] The focus will mostly be on headlines, key sample sentences and any related material that appears alongside the report in question. I have italicised some words to aid the reader in following the analysis.

Harmondsworth: contesting causes and contents

The Glasgow *Evening Times* is the only paper in the sample to carry the story on Tuesday 20 July. The story appears at the top of page six. The headline reads: '*Riot* after asylum seeker's *death*'. This is the only headline that includes any reference to the suicide and thus suggests any kind of link between that and the violence occurring. The word 'death' rather than 'suicide' is used however. The paper may have taken the decision to use this label because the full facts of the case had not yet been released by the police. The chief inspector of prisons, Anne Owers, is quoted as saying that Harmondsworth detention centre was 'failing to provide a safe and stable environment' and that 'this was reflected in increasing levels of disorder, damage and escape attempts', the implication being that these problems could have caused the suicide.

The *Evening Times* continues the story on 21 July. It appears on page four in the 'Britain today' section with the headline '16 in asylum riot *quiz*', suggesting there were unanswered questions about the event and therefore not attributing blame. The lead sentence reads: 'Sixteen men are today being quizzed by police about *riots* that rocked a refugee centre'. Simple though it seems, to label the asylum seekers 'men' allows them more complex identities than they are afforded by the more regularly used label 'asylum seekers', the latter having a narrow focus on one aspect of identity. Although the word 'riots' is an emotive one and perhaps questionable in the circumstances, the syntactic construction 'riots that rocked a refugee centre' puts the abstract noun 'riot' in the position of agent rather than placing the asylum seekers there, and again does not attribute blame.

The Herald carries the story on Wednesday 21 July on the bottom half of page four. The headline reads: 'Arrests after violence at detention centre'. The first reference to the death/suicide is in the following sentence: 'The tornado unit, a squad of prison officers with a formidable reputation for swiftly bringing control back into the hands of the authorities, was *deployed* early yesterday to *quell* the disorder which broke out within hours of the death.' The military discourse is striking here with the use of the words 'deployed' and 'quell', reinforcing the stereotype of the asylum 'problem' as a two-sided 'battle'. The nuances of meaning in this sentence appear to be rather critical, however, and suggest heavy-handedness on the part of the tornado unit.

The *Scottish Daily Express* also carries the story on 21 July, on page three, taking up the full page. The headline reads: '£500,000 cost of riot at the asylum "*hotel*" '. The focus is on cost and the story is rather decontextualised in that most of it talks about the violence as a 'stand alone' issue rather than in relation to what preceded or followed it. The use of the word 'hotel' in the headline, later sourced to Mr Kehra, one of the centre's chaplains, arguably *re*contextualises the situation by suggesting the asylum seekers had no reason to 'riot' given their favourable conditions, which redoubles the negative connotations applied to the detainees.

War metaphors are present in the *Express* story as in *The Herald* story, but in the *Express* story the blame lies squarely with the asylum seekers: 'Riot *forces* fought a 16 hour *battle* to *quell an uprising* by asylum seekers yesterday at the UK's leading detention centre'. The 'us and them' differentiation is further reinforced by the following sentence: 'Rapid-response "Tornado unit" prison officers were called in to *corner* 80 rioting inmates . . .'. Using a word normally associated with the hunting of animals dehumanises the asylum seekers involved.

Dungavel: reproducing discourses and repositioning 'us and them'?

The Herald carries this story at the bottom of page one and continues it on page two. The headline reads: 'Death inquiry to *expose* Dungavel', implying that there are negative things about Dungavel that are not known to (and may even be being kept from) the public. An immediate link is made with events at Harmondsworth, from which the man who died was moved, and the death in placed in the context of other deaths, the figures suggesting a steep rise in deaths and suicide attempts.

The story states that Home Secretary David Blunkett believes conditions in Dungavel to be satisfactory and says, 'the announcement astonished Dungavel's many critics, but they may not have to wait long to *return fire*.' This is an interesting reworking of both the military metaphors and the 'us and them'

pattern we have seen previously. The image is one of Dungavel's critics battling with David Blunkett (and by extension the Home Office/government as a whole) not over details but over the very existence of the detention system. Whether such discourse is reproduced consciously or not, there is evidence that the asylum situation as battle is both a dominant motif and a site of struggle.

The *Scottish Daily Mirror* also carries the story on 26 July, discussing it in its editorial on page six and placing a story about it on the top half of page twelve. The editorial, headlined 'Asylum shame', is of particular interest to the discussion in hand, notwithstanding the more emotive tone found in editorials. The piece states that prisoners should not be treated like cattle and goes on to say, in italicised type, '*it is even worse when we do this to people who have not committed any crimes at all*'. The italic type sets this out as the main point of the story, suggesting that this is the *Mirror*'s main critique of Dungavel, and the reference to cattle, consciously or otherwise, reproduces the animalistic metaphors we saw in the *Express*'s use of 'cornered' to very different effect. Writing '*we* do this to people . . .' sets up an 'us and them' pattern of all non-asylum seekers versus asylum seekers. The *Mirror* itself and presumably most of its readers are not people who are either involved in the detention process or advocate it, so this use of 'we' suggests that people should take responsibility even if they are not involved themselves, that is, they should campaign against Dungavel.

CASE STUDY 2: MISBAH RANA

The flight of a young girl from Scotland to Pakistan in the summer of 2006 and the ensuing custody battle threw into question the Scottish media's approach to race and ethnicity. This story ran on and off in the Scottish press for five months, culminating in reports of Misbah (I will refer to her by this name as this is the name by which she has said she wishes to be known) remaining with her father in Pakistan after an out-of-court settlement. The case study will analyse the first week of reporting as it is in some ways a microcosm of the coverage as a whole. It illustrates in two ways that imbalance or prejudice do not have to be conscious to be problematic. Firstly, the information that came to light from day three onwards caused journalists and audiences to reassess how they had 'read' the situation and as such provides a good argument for the existence of dominant discourses, and different ones in different societies. Secondly, within a week of the beginning of the coverage, parts of the press had embarked on a kind of 'metareporting' about *how* the case had been reported and whether/how this was problematic, and as such is an example of that which was backgrounded being forcibly foregrounded (see Fairclough) in order to make sense of it. Again a comprehensive analysis of the full coverage is not possible, so I have chosen to focus on Scotland-based papers due to the

relative prominence of the story and the fact that the interplay between Scottish national identity and other aspects of the story is one of the most striking elements of the analysis.

Day one: identities

The first time the story appears in the Scottish press is on 28 August on the front page of the *Evening Times* with the headline 'Girl, 12 "*stolen*" from *Scots home*; world wide hunt amid fears youngster was kidnapped and flown out to Pakistan'. Although the word 'stolen' is placed in quotation marks, we are never told who the source of this description was, thus allowing it to 'stand alone' and potentially have greater implications for how the reader engages with the story. Although having a Scots home is not synonymous with being Scots, that national identity is certainly implied and is placed front and centre by appearing in the headline. We find out over the course of the coverage that Misbah has dual citizenship of the UK and Pakistan, and does not consider *herself* Scots. Her name, 'Molly Campbell', appears in the fourth sentence and in the highlight. It is not until the seventh sentence that we are told that she 'is also known as Misbah Iram Ahmed Rana'. This pattern of giving Misbah the name 'Molly Campbell' and including 'Misbah' later as an alternative occurs for several days across papers.

Day two: generalisations

The Scotsman carries the story on 29 August. Different stories appear in the first and third editions of the paper. The first edition story also uses a claim in the headline: 'Girl of 12 taken to Pakistan by father for arranged marriage, says family'. The claim is sourced in this story, but the 'family' is in fact one person, Misbah's maternal grandmother. We do read in the lead sentence that she was '*allegedly* abducted', but this pattern of portraying as a fact in the headline that which is alleged later in the report is repeated in many of the stories. The headline in the third edition is 'Hunt for girl, 12, taken from school and flown to Pakistan by father' and the arranged marriage claim does not appear in this story, suggesting that it may already be in doubt.

On 29 August the *Evening Times* and the *Daily Record* also use the grandmother's claim for headline material. The *Evening Times* headline reads '*Child bride fears* over "kidnap" girl'. Although 'kidnap' appears in quotation marks, 'child bride fears' does not and is arguably given more gravity than it deserves as the fears too are based on the opinion of one person. The *Daily Record*'s headline is 'Girl of 12 *kidnapped to wed man*, 25; Exclusive: gran *tells* of Molly's abduction'. Both the abduction and the alleged plan for Molly to enter an

arranged marriage appear in this headline, and in the first two sentences of the story, as fact. The use of the word 'tells' is also problematic as Molly's grandmother was not an eyewitness to her granddaughter leaving Lewis. In the sixth sentence we read that Molly's 'given name' is 'Misbah Iram Ahmed Rana', which arguably gives the Islamic name more status than it has had in other coverage.

The Herald runs with the story on the same day with the headline '*Abducted island girl* may now be in Pakistan; Pupil vanishes with sister'. The abduction is presented as fact and national identity is once again front and centre as she is referred to as an 'island girl'. Indeed, focusing on the fact that she lived on Lewis could be seen to reinforce the 'us and them' pattern: there is arguably more symbolic distance between Pakistan and a 'traditional' Scottish location such as Lewis than there is between Pakistan and Scotland in general. This description is surprising, given that the highlight tells us 'they had moved to Lewis recently'. Having the adjective 'abducted' modify the description of Misbah presents it as fact. Both of these elements of description are somewhat contradictory to the fact that this is the first story to place Misbah's Islamic name in the same sentence as her Scottish one, albeit the Scottish name comes first and the status of the Islamic name is perhaps lower than it has been in other stories as we are told she was '*previously* known as Misbah Rana'.

The only paper not to have the possibility of abduction, emotive or otherwise, in its headline is the *Press and Journal*. The headline on 29 August reads 'Police hunt for missing girl leads to Pakistan'.

Day three: contradictions

The focus of the story shifts on 30 August. *The Scotsman* again runs a slightly different story in its first and third editions, with both headlines focusing on Misbah's mother Louise Campbell's plea for the return of her daughter. This is an interesting choice of focus for the headlines, given that it begins to become apparent on this day that Misbah may have travelled to Pakistan willingly, which is arguably more newsworthy. This suggestion comes both from friends of her father who speak to the media *and* from her mother's statement which includes the words, 'I would like to say to Molly that we miss her so much and we beg her to come home to us. She has to know that she is not in any trouble and we are not angry; we just want her home.' There is a nuanced shift away from the suggestion of abduction from the first-edition headline to the third-edition headline: they read '*Bring* my daughter home to me, begs mother' and 'We miss Molly so much, we just *want* her home'.

The *Evening Times* of 30 August contains two contradictory stories on the subject. The first, on page two, has the headline 'Mum in tearful plea over *abducted Molly*'. Once again we see the abduction presented as fact in the headline, by using the adjective 'abducted' to modify 'Molly', and a shift to saying it is 'alleged' in the lead sentence. The second story, on page six, has the headline 'Girl, 12, "begged" to be taken to Pakistan; Glasgow friend tells of pleas by youngster to dad'. It covers the claims of former Glasgow councillor Bashir Maan, a friend of Misbah's father Sajad Rana. It seems odd for the paper not to have conflated these two stories, or placed them on the same page. The practicalities and time constraints of producing a newspaper notwithstanding, these editorial choices do not shift the focus as far as the content itself would suggest it could have been.

The first time the possibility that this is not an abduction is explicitly stated in a headline is in *The Herald* on 31 August. It reads 'Pakistani father "did not abduct daughter"; New claims by friends over island girl's disappearance'. The story is based on Bashir Maan's claims and introduces for the first time the information that, after her parents' split, Misbah had lived with her father until 2002.

Days four and five: heroes and villains

On 31 August and 1 September a number of stories focus on Glasgow Central MP Mohammad Sarwar having agreed to meet with Misbah in Pakistan, but again the framing is rather different in different papers. The *Daily Record*'s headline is 'I'll *find* Molly; Exclusive: MP Sarwar *pledges to help* mum of girl, 12, *snatched* to Pakistan'. This headline has echoes of traditional narratives (Propp 1968), with Mr Sarwar portrayed as a hero figure being sent out on a quest by Louise Campbell to win Misbah back from the villain who has 'snatched' her. This is rather at odds with *The Scotsman's* coverage which once again includes different headlines in the first and third editions, 'MP hopes to *meet missing* schoolgirl in Pakistan today' and 'MP in Pakistan as an "*honest broker*" to *meet missing* girl'. The second of these shifts the tone to neutral as rgards the conflict between Misbah's parents, as does the Aberdeen *Press and Journal's* 'MP flies to meet Molly as *row rages*'. Contrary to Mr Sarwar going on a quest to 'find' Misbah, we hear of a 'private meeting' having already been arranged. Sarwar also dismisses the arranged marriage claims, which leads to the headline in *The Herald*: 'Sarwar to meet "abducted" girl in Pakistan; Child bride claims rejected'.

Days six and seven: battles

The *Press and Journal*'s use of 'row' foreshadows the next shift: on 2 and 3 September, a large proportion of what is written frames the situation in

military discourse, as a 'battle'. Some examples of headlines are: 'Custody *war* as Molly begs to stay with dad; *Tug-of-love* girl, 12, insists she wants to stay in Pakistan' (*Evening Times*, 2 September, p. 6); 'It was my choice. I like it here and want to stay with my father'; Parents prepare for *international custody battle* over daughter' (*The Herald*, 2 September, p. 5); 'Molly wins *battle* to stay with dad; judge says girl remains in Pakistan till custody is decided' (*Sunday Mail*, 3 September, p. 2).

'Battle' is of course a common metaphor to use for custody situations, but the front-page coverage in the *Press and Journal* on 2 September extends the discourse in an interesting way. The lead sentence following the headline 'Call me Misbah – and I was not kidnapped' reads 'Schoolgirl Molly Campbell sat *shoulder-to-shoulder* with her father yesterday as she faced the world's media in Pakistan and insisted: I was not kidnapped'. 'Shoulder-to-shoulder' has immediate echoes of its high-profile use during the Iraq war and adds gravity to the situation.

CONCLUSIONS: EMPOWERING, DISTANCING, METAREPORTING AND HISTORICISING

It is apparent from the above that many of the news headlines on these two days following Misbah's press conference are presented as direct quotes from Misbah herself. In the headline of its story on page nine on 2 September, the *Daily Record* reinforces this by using upper case and referring to Misbah 'speaking out': 'MY REAL NAME IS MISBAH . . . I DON'T WANT TO GO HOME; SNATCH PROBE GIRL SPEAKS OUT'. There are two ways to view this trend: does it empower Misbah and give her the voice she has not had thus far? Or does it allow papers to avoid deciding on the wording for headlines that, at least for some of them, are in blatant contradiction to what they had been reporting just a few days earlier?

September 2 and 3, a Saturday and Sunday, see various opinion pieces alongside the latest news reports. The opinion pieces display a range of reporting strategies: distancing strategies similar to the use of Misbah's own words (for example, the *Sunday Mail*'s 'Opinion: Molly must have a say in her future'); discussions about the complexities of the story and Misbah's identity; and a strategy I have labelled 'metareporting', that is reporting which critiques how the press covered the story when it initially broke. It is interesting to view these opinion themes in relation to the previous and current coverage in the papers in which they appear.

On 2 September *The Scotsman*'s comment headline contradicts its news headline somewhat. On page four we read the headline 'I was *not kidnapped*, I just want to live with my family', while on page twenty-three we read

'*Abduction* leaves a trail of heartache in its wake'. Closer scrutiny demonstrates that the news story is very quote-led, drawing on both Misbah's press conference and an interview with her brother Omar, thus avoiding the need to take a stance on the issue. The paper instead positions itself in a broader sense by using a discourse of traditional family values. The comment piece frames Misbah as a 'victim of marriage breakdown' and paints her as a rather fickle child whose statement must be 'taken with a pinch of salt'. This disempowerment of Misbah continues with the final words of the piece, which play down the gravity of the situation and focus squarely on the centrality of the mother/daughter relationship: 'there will likely come a time, in the not too distant future, when she will want her mum. And what will happen then? Because Lahore is an awfully long way from the Isle of Lewis'. The focus on the personal and the emotional arguably allows the paper to take a position on the issue in a roundabout way: it empathises with Louise Campbell's heartache at the 'abduction; or at least seeming abduction' and likens Louise's situation to that of Lady Catherine Meyer, wife of the former British ambassador to the US, whose sons *were* abducted. The traditional family values discourse is continued in one of the more general comment pieces, 'Word of the week', which focuses on 'family' and frames the Misbah story as shattering a family unit.

It is notable that many of the pieces over these two days, both news and opinion, focus on the contestation about Misbah's name. It has become a metaphor for the whole case, and the papers cement its place in public discourse. *The Herald*, which takes a 'metareporting' approach to its coverage over these two days, highlights the name issue in the headline of almost every story it runs on the story. Its front page headline on 2 September is 'Girl wants to stay with her father; MY NAME ISN'T MOLLY, IT IS MISBAH', and the lead sentence of a feature on page fourteen is 'For Molly Campbell of Stornoway, read Misbah Iram Ahmed Rana of Lahore'. The feature is headlined 'A child caught in the middle; Custody decisions do not belong in press conferences', an example of 'metareporting' in that it critiques media involvement in the case, both invited and uninvited. The *Sunday Herald* on 3 September carried an openly critical piece on page six headlined 'Kidnap claim "shows media bias"; RACISM: PRESS UNDER SCRUTINY; Anger at newsrooms' treatment of Misbah Rana case' and an opinion piece on page thirty-nine headlined 'Molly Misbah; A story of our times; When a young girl went missing from her mother's home in Scotland and turned up with her father in Pakistan, the world jumped to conclusions. The wrong ones. Neil Mackay separates fact from fiction'.

This final headline is interesting on several levels and provides an appropriate conclusion to the wider discussion. Firstly, its word choice and structure provide a microcosm of the case as a whole: the two names and the two parents

are given presupposed equal status and it is pointed out that 'the world' has thus far not given them this. Secondly, it positions the *Sunday Herald* in opposition to 'the world' suggesting that it did not engage in jumping to 'the wrong conclusions'. And thirdly, the words 'a story of our times' historicise the Misbah case and present the case as a metaphor for the press treatment of race and ethnicity in this country. This is perhaps unfair, given some of the good practice we have seen in the discussion of asylum coverage, or at least good practice relative to the UK more widely, but undoubtedly the case of Misbah Rana has and will continue to cause journalists to be conscious of the discourses they employ. It also reminds us all of the ideological force of language, and the responsibility which comes along with that.

Although it has not been possible to explore broadcast coverage of both cases here, certainly as far as Misbah Rana is concerned, it would appear to have followed a similar pattern to press coverage, in that it began with a suggestion of abduction, then called that into question and finally moved into 'metareporting' about its own coverage of the story. Further analysis in this area would be welcome.

NOTES

1. The newspapers monitored were the *Press and Journal*, *The Herald*, *The Courier*, *The Scotsman*, the *Daily Record*, the *Evening Times*, *The Scottish Sun*, the *Scottish Daily Mail*, the *Scottish Daily Mirror*, the *Scottish Daily Express*, the *Sunday Herald*, the *Sunday Mail*, and *Scotland on Sunday*. The same papers were examined in the Misbah Rana case study.
2. Refer to Oxfam 2006 for further discussion of the coverage.

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